

REMARKS

A Request for Continued Examination has been submitted in connection with the above-identified application. This response addresses the issues raised in the final Official Action dated March 19, 2004.

Claims 1-5 and 10-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 02185975. Claims 1-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 99/17034 to *Nijse et al.*, in view of U.S. Patent No. to *Kiyoshi*. Claims 1-6 and 10-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 1035643 to *Ooyama et al.*, in view of U.S. Patent No. to *Kiyoshi*.

By way of the foregoing amendments, Claims 1-13 have been canceled from the application, and new Claims 19-33 have been added.

New independent Claim 19 defines a fixation and positioning device for fixing and positioning a component while applying a process, wherein the component is one selected from the group consisting of a direct current supplied component, a permanently magnetic component, and a direct current supplied permanently magnetic component, the component being subjectable to a first magnetic field, the device comprising:

a first mechanical fixation means and a second mechanical fixation means, spaced a distance apart from each other, and arranged and adapted to receive the component between the first and the second mechanical fixation means; and a magnetic field generation device arranged and adapted to generate a second magnetic field, which, in co-action with the first magnetic field, effects a force to support the component against its gravitational force along a distance between the

first mechanical fixation means and the second mechanical fixation means. None of the art of record disclose these patentable features. In particular, none of the art of record disclose the use of mechanical fixation means and magnetic support means at the same time or in one device.

In contrast, *Kiyoshi et al.* relates to forming high purity and high quality thin films by suspending a substrate or substrate holder in a vacuum vessel in a non-contact state. *Kiyoshi et al.* explicitly waives the use of a mechanical fixation device (See Abstract, which states “[m]echanical and thermal stresses by contact with a wafer holder are avoided”). Therefore, *Kiyoshi et al.* fails to disclose first and second mechanical fixation means, as now defined in independent Claim 19.

In addition, *Kiyoshi et al.* fails to disclose an additional magnetic support means, which generates a second magnetic field in addition to a first magnetic field. In contrast, only one magnetic field is generated, which is used to suspend the substrate. Accordingly, *Kiyoshi et al.* fails to disclose the patentable features of independent Claim 19.

The *Njisse et al.* reference fails to make up for the foregoing deficiencies of *Kiyoshi et al.* In particular, *Njisse et al.* describes the contactless support of a platform by magnetic or electrostatic bearings. There is absolutely no disclosure regarding the use of first and second mechanical fixation means, as now defined in independent Claim 19.

The Examiner alleges that figures 7 and 8 of *Njisse et al.* disclose a holding means to fix a component to be processed at its end sections wherein the holding means at the same time form electrical connection means. Applicants respectfully disagree with this assertion. In contrast, the figures illustrate a platform 1 which is

suspended by contactless magnetic support arrangements. *Njisse et al.* specifically describes any mechanical arrangements as disadvantageous. See page 6, second paragraph of *Njisse et al.* Moreover, there is no magnetic field generated in connection with mechanical fixation means. Rather, an electrical connection means is only disclosed in connection with the magnetic field generation means. In addition, with respect to figure 9 of *Njisse et al.*, clamp 96 is not used as a contactless support arrangement, but rather as part of a test arrangement for measuring forces.

Finally, it is noted that neither of the components to be processed in the *Kiyoshi et al.* and *Njisse et al.* references are one of a direct current supplied component, a permanently magnetic component, and a direct current supplied permanently magnetic component, as now defined in independent Claim 19. As such, neither *Kiyoshi et al.* nor *Njisse et al.*, in combination or alone, disclose the patentable features of independent Claim 19.

Finally, *Ooyama et al.* fails to disclose that which is missing from *Kiyoshi et al.*. In particular, *Ooyama et al.* discloses a control apparatus for a magnetic bearing that can be used to support a magnetizable object. The bearing in all cases is constructed of one electromagnet above and one electromagnet below the object. *Ooyama et al.* fails to disclose first or second mechanical fixation devices, as now defined in independent Claim 19. As such, both *Ooyama et al.* and *Kiyoshi et al.* fail to disclose the patentable features of independent Claim 19.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the device of independent Claim 19, and the claims depending therefrom, is patentably distinguishable over the applied

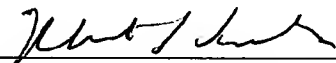
documents. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of record and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner have any questions with regard to the above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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